

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 1, 2006

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 30, 2006

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 1496**

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**Introduced by Senator Dunn**

February 23, 2006

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An act to add Section 739.1.5 to the Public Utilities Code, relating to public utilities.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1496, as amended, Dunn. Public utilities: California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) program.

*(1) Under existing law, the Public Utilities Commission has regulatory authority over public utilities, including electrical corporations and gas corporations. The California Constitution grants the commission certain general powers over all public utilities, including the power to fix rates, subject to control by the Legislature. Existing law creates a program of assistance to low-income electric and gas customers, known as the California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) program. The Public Utilities Act requires that, when gas or electric service is provided by a master-meter customer to users who are tenants of a mobilehome park, apartment building, or similar residential complex, the master-meter customer charge each user at the same rate which would be applicable if the user were receiving gas or electricity directly from the gas or electric company.*

This bill would require electrical and gas corporations to provide information upon request to ~~law enforcement officials~~ county sealers for the purpose of verifying compliance with the CARE program and ensuring that residents enrolled in the CARE program are receiving their discounts. The bill would specify that this information includes,

among other things, the names and addresses of residents of master-meter mobilehome parks, apartment buildings, or ~~similar~~ residential housing complexes who are enrolled in CARE. *The bill would require that county sealers use the information only for authorized purposes and not disclose the information other than to law enforcement officials for the purposes of enforcement of rates, as adjusted by CARE program discounts, charged by master meter customers for electricity and natural gas delivered through a submeter service system.*

*(2) Under existing law, a violation of the Public Utilities Act or an order or direction of the Public Utilities Commission is a crime.*

*Because the provisions of this bill would be a part of the act, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program by creating a new crime.*

*The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.*

*This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.*

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~-yes.  
State-mandated local program: ~~no~~-yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 739.1.5 is added to the Public Utilities  
2 Code, to read:  
3 739.1.5. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the  
4 contrary, electrical or gas corporations shall provide information  
5 upon request to ~~law enforcement officials, including~~ county  
6 sealers; for the purpose of verifying compliance with Section  
7 739.1 and ensuring that residents enrolled in the CARE program  
8 are actually receiving the discounts to which they are entitled.  
9 This information includes, but is not limited to, the names and  
10 addresses of residents who are qualified and enrolled in CARE  
11 residing in master-meter mobilehome parks, apartment buildings,  
12 or ~~similar~~ residential housing complexes. *County sealers shall*  
13 *use the requested information for authorized purposes only and*  
14 *shall not disclose the information requested pursuant to this*  
15 *section other than to law enforcement officials for purposes of*

1 *enforcement of rates, as adjusted by CARE program discounts,*  
2 *charged by master meter customers for electricity and natural*  
3 *gas delivered through a submeter service system.*

4 *SEC. 2. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to*  
5 *Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because*  
6 *the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school*  
7 *district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or*  
8 *infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the*  
9 *penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section*  
10 *17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a*  
11 *crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the*  
12 *California Constitution.*